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ABSTRACT

The Educational Amendments Act of 1972 authorizes the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to improve postsecondary educational opportunities by providing assistance to educational institutions and agencies for a broad range of reforms and innovations. To implement this authority, the Secretary has established the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, a separate organizational unit with the Department of HEW, under the general supervision of the Assistant Secretary for Education. The fund is administered by a director and a small professional staff. The director is responsive to a 15-member, board appointed by the Secretary and authorized to recommend policy priorities for the fund and to review grants and contracts of a specific kind and amount. The fund is a governmental, grant-making organization with four distinguishing characteristics. It is comprehensive, responsive, action-oriented, and risk-taking. The fund administers a comprehensive program competition to which applicants are invited to submit proposals related to any or all of the purposes for which the fund can make awards. (Author/KE)

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FUND FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
400 MARYLAND AVENUE, S.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20202

FY 1976

PROGRAM INFORMATION

AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM

NOTE: PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 5, 1976

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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE FUND

A. The Fund's Mandate

The Education Amendments Act of 1972 authorizes the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to improve postsecondary educational opportunities by providing assistance to educational institutions and agencies for a broad range of reforms and innovations.*

To implement this authority, the Secretary has established the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, a separate organizational unit within the Department of H.E.W., under the general supervision of the Assistant Secretary for Education. The Fund is administered by a Director and a small professional staff. The Director is responsive to a fifteen-member, Secretarially-appointed Board which is authorized to recommend policy priorities for the Fund, and to review grants and contracts of a specified kind and amount.

The Fund is a governmental, grant-making organization with four distinguishing characteristics:

--It is comprehensive in scope, covering the entire range of postsecondary education.

--It is responsive, seeking to yield to external initiative the task of conceiving and developing proposals to be funded.

--It is action-oriented. While the Fund will entertain proposals for policy-oriented studies and feasibility studies directly related to reform and innovation, it will not fund proposals for basic research.

--It is risk-taking. The Fund will entertain proposals for new and unproven ideas as well as proven ones.

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*The specific authority is contained in Title III, Section 404 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended by the Education Amendments Act of 1972.

The authorizing legislation for the Fund identifies eight purposes for which grants and contracts may be awarded. These are:

--encouraging the reform, innovation, and improvement of postsecondary education and providing equal educational opportunity for all;

--the creation of institutions and programs involving new paths to career and professional training, and new combinations of academic and experiential learning;

--the establishment of institutions and programs based on the technology of communications;

--the carrying out in postsecondary educational institutions of changes in internal structure and operations designed to clarify institutional priorities and purposes;

--the design and introduction of cost-effective methods of instruction and operation;

--the introduction of institutional reforms designed to expand individual opportunities for entering and re-entering institutions and pursuing programs of study tailored to individual needs;

--the introduction of reforms in graduate education, in the structure of academic professions, and in the recruitment and retention of faculties; and

--the creation of new institutions and programs for examining and awarding credentials to individuals, and the introduction of reforms in current institutional practices related thereto.

To achieve these purposes, the Fund administers a comprehensive program competition to which applicants are invited to submit proposals related to any or all of the purposes for which the Fund can make awards. In FY 1976, the comprehensive program will constitute the sole new proposal competition. Purposes covered in prior years in special-focus programs and national projects' competitions are incorporated this year in the comprehensive program.

B. General Criteria

The basic purpose of the Fund is to provide support for postsecondary education to become increasingly effective. In the next section of this announcement several directions of improvement are set forth and proposals will be reviewed in terms of their potential contributions to these directions.* There are, however, three general criteria for improvement against which all proposals will be tested: is it cost-effective, does it have impact beyond the applicant's setting, and is it a learner-centered improvement?

--Cost-effectiveness. Increased public expenditures for post-secondary education have generated new demands for accountability and more effective use of resources. Thus, the Fund is interested in encouraging more value for the same dollar, or the same value for fewer dollars. In addition, since educational changes will increasingly necessitate a reallocation of existing resources rather than an expansion of new resources, the Fund will be inclined to finance techniques which encourage such reallocations.

--Far-reaching impact. In order to have maximum impact with limited resources, the Fund is particularly interested in improvements which have far-reaching effects. This does not mean that every improvement must have wide applicability, nor that only replicable innovations will be funded. It does mean, however, that the Fund encourages solutions to problems of a general and structural kind, rather than problems which are temporary or of limited significance.

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* See Section IV for a summary of all applicable criteria.

--Learner-centered change. The basic purpose of the Fund is to improve educational opportunities for learners. This does not mean that only those improvements which will directly benefit learners will receive support--many changes designed to improve institutions and agencies which provide instruction or other educational services may have a substantial though indirect impact on learners. It does mean that the Fund will want to know what the probable or eventual impact of each improvement will be on the learning population to be served.

Many associations, organizations, and agencies are necessary to improve postsecondary education. The Fund thus encourages proposals from the entire range of higher and postsecondary educational institutions, including profit and non-profit, private, trade, technical, and business schools, as well as from educational organizations and agencies such as student and faculty associations, trustees, State agencies and other governmental organizations, and providers of educational services in settings such as museums, libraries, and workplaces. Proposals are welcome from newly-formed as well as established organizations.

II. COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM

In the comprehensive program, the Fund welcomes proposals for reform, innovation, and improvement of postsecondary education which fit no strict categories of grant-making activity. We recognize that bold and innovative ideas are, by definition, apt to defy modes of problem definition and descriptions of approaches currently in use.

The Fund recognizes, however, that some guidance about directions of improvement beyond a general invitation is needed by applicants. For this reason, the Fund has identified eight broad targets for improvement within the comprehensive program. These targets or concerns are not mutually exclusive, and they should not be taken as an exhaustive list. In each case, however, a problem is highlighted as a significant area for improvement in postsecondary education. These problems are, in effect, windows through which special concerns and needs of current postsecondary education may be addressed. Briefly stated, they are:

--the continued exclusion of working adults, minorities, and other categories of people from opportunities to further their education;

--high rates of attrition and other evidence that scores of students are not being effectively engaged by the environment or teaching methods of our mass education institutions;

--inadequate understanding of what quality education is, or how to measure the performance of individuals or institutions;

--the lack of fit between the skills, knowledge, and attitudes taught by postsecondary institutions, and the current and future demands of our economy and society;

--the lack of interest and effort on the part of faculty to increase productivity in the face of rising costs;

--insufficient recognition and utilization of industry, trade and technical schools, agencies such as libraries and museums, and other resources as part of our overall system of postsecondary education;

--the lack of collaboration and resource sharing among institutions;

--inadequate information and advice to people trying to decide which institutions would best serve their interests; and

--growing rigidities within institutions, especially those within large public multi-campus systems.

In the pages which follow, these problems are analyzed and some of the possible directions for improvement are described.

Because the Fund purposely avoids categorization in the comprehensive program, there is a greater burden on the applicant to convey the significance and feasibility of a proposed action. In so doing, applicants are urged to identify the general concern addressed by the solution as well as being as clear and precise as possible regarding the specific problems which are being addressed, the nature of the proposed actions, and the expected outcomes of these actions.

A. Extending Effective Educational Opportunity to Those Still Not Adequately Served by the System

For over a decade, the provision of equal educational opportunity has been a major national priority in postsecondary education. While considerable progress has been made in broadening access for many groups previously excluded, barriers still exist which prevent others from fully participating in education beyond the high school level. Geographical isolation often poses a barrier to rural residents; conventional scheduling often prevents working adults and housewives from gaining access; restrictive financing policies may result in inequities for part-time learners. The Fund continues to be interested in effective responses to meet the needs of these, and other, excluded or underserved groups.

Yet exposure alone--particularly exposure only to the most available forms of postsecondary education--does not, we have learned, guarantee significant equality of educational experience. For education to be both available and meaningful, changes are required not only in academic programs and practices but in peer environments, supporting services, possibilities for mobility among institutions. Such changes affect fundamental institutional assumptions about the "who", "when", "where", and "how", of postsecondary education. Such changes can significantly improve the quality of postsecondary education for everyone.

In recent years, special recruitment programs, special tutorial and support services, cultural awareness programs, and other similar efforts have been undertaken in behalf of groups previously under-

represented in postsecondary education. For many of these programs, particularly for remediation efforts through special services, financing is available from Federal programs other than the Fund. In addition, considerable financing is available from outside the Fund for student assistance as well as for the basic strengthening of institutions serving large number of low income and minority students. The Fund, with its very limited resources, can do little to supplement these activities and thus turns its attention to questions such as: Are there more effective programs apart from student aid, leading to increased graduate and professional enrollment of minorities and women? Are there highly economical methods of extending educational opportunities to those who cannot come to campuses? Are there new approaches that adapt institutions to the needs and interests of new learners?

B. Meeting Individual Needs in a Mass System

In the twenty years prior to 1970, enrollment in postsecondary education expanded from two to eight million students. This dramatic increase in enrollment was accompanied by changes both in the composition of the student body and in the character of educational institutions.

-- the number of female students between 25 and 37 years of age increased 55 percent while the number of male students of the same age increased 27 percent.

-- many more students are working or have family responsibilities.

-- many more students, approximately one-half of all entering freshmen, enter college first through institutions which

have no admission requirements.

-- institutions have become larger, with nearly one out of every three students today attending an institution with more than 20,000 students.

-- increasingly campuses are linked together in multi-campus systems, with more than 40 percent of today's enrollment in such systems.

These changes create major concerns. How can the collegiate process, initially designed for the full-time, high achieving student in a relatively small institution, be adjusted to encompass individual differences and permit personalization of the educational experience without increasing the resources required? How can wide variations in learning speed and academic ability be effectively accomodated within open admissions colleges? How can large institutions build in the options needed for older students, women and working students?

C. Improving Programs, Personnel and Instruction for More Effective Education

In the 1960s following Sputnik there was an almost unquestioning belief in the value of postsecondary education. It was a period of expanding support and growing enrollments. Education, it was commonly believed, would solve a wide range of problems confronting society. In the 1970s, however, belief is giving way to skepticism about the effectiveness of education at all levels and particularly beyond high school. This loss of confidence in education is in part a valid response to shortcomings in the traditional content and pedagogy of our colleges and universities. And there is some evidence of a failure

of self-confidence in the teaching profession itself.

There is some question whether the combination of knowledge and skills needed to function effectively in today's society is supported by the disciplines which dominate most colleges and universities. Learners want more than knowledge; they want to develop abilities that will permit them to perform effectively in work as well as in their civic and social life. Many are concerned with their continuing personal development and the use of concentrated educational activity as a basis for that lifelong learning. The traditional organization of knowledge may too often frustrate these needs.

Moreover, the established methods of instruction may never have served more than a small minority adequately. For instance, one study of the lecture mode showed that students tested immediately after a lecture, with access to their notes and to a prepared summary, retained no more than 42 percent of the lecture's content. Tested one week later without their notes, the students could recall only 17 percent of the lecture's content.

The problems of redefining what to teach and how to teach it are compounded by the fact that postsecondary educators are working in a period of economic constraint and professional doubts. In many faculties, 80 to 90 percent of the staff are already tenured, and there is little room for new members. No-growth budgets and restrictive contract agreements also help make innovation more difficult than ever to initiate and sustain. The teaching profession will have to change

internally in order to be flexible enough to meet the demands of the learning population in the last quarter of this century and in order to overcome society's distrust.

These combined circumstances lead to central concerns for post-secondary education. Can we move beyond an interest in mere survival in this difficult period? How can we develop educational programs which integrate organized knowledge and traditional insights with the useful skills and personal awareness needed in today's society? How can we develop instructional modes adapted to today's students and to the goals of new programs? How can educational personnel learn new skills, new roles, and new approaches to adapt to changed circumstances?

D. Creating and Applying More Meaningful Criteria for the Award of Postsecondary Credentials

There is increasing concern that academic credentials are less useful than they should be as indices of intellectual development and predictors of effective performance in the social roles for which graduates are prepared. Some would argue that this is an inevitable consequence of the lowering, if not the demise, of academic standards. They observe that admissions standards have been lowered and that academic grade averages have risen. Such arguments are frequently advanced in support of a return to a more selective or hierarchial system of postsecondary education.

The focus on declining standards misstates the problem. A more thorough analysis of the changing significance of academic credentials

would consider the following arguments:

-- many postsecondary institutions have permitted the means of instruction to become the ends. Credit and degrees are awarded on the basis of time spent in class rather than attainments assessed against the purposes of the institution.

-- institutional and program objectives tend to be vague. They frequently have only a tenuous relationship to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective performance in adult roles.

-- the emphasis on classroom instruction has resulted in an underinvestment in assessment procedures and many programs lack the capacity to assess the results of their instructional processes.

-- the current approach to assessing students relies on the private judgment of individual faculty members and is seldom consciously linked to a wholistic understanding of the program and the graduate. Furthermore, the emphasis is on mastery of information rather than the capacity to apply knowledge and the ability to effectively carry out essential tasks.

To the extent that these arguments are valid, it should be no surprise that academic grades and credentials are such poor predictors of performance after graduation.

Furthermore, the absence of clear criteria for awarding credentials and appropriate assessment procedures makes it difficult to recognize the legitimacy of learning that occurs outside of the classroom. Therefore,

it is difficult to accredit the skills and knowledge that individuals, particularly working adults, bring to the program. While the presence of narrow criteria of questionable relevance produces one form of inequity, the absence of criteria also leads to inequities.

New approaches to the definition of criteria and the assessment of student performance are being developed, tested, and gradually adopted. These approaches begin with a reexamination and clarification of program goals and the development of explicit criteria of attainment that are based on an understanding of the social settings students are preparing to enter. They take a broad perspective on the dimensions of human talent and encompass application and action as well as knowledge and reflection. They require new organizational arrangements and resource allocations that reflect the significance of the assessment function.

Significant beginnings have been made but no clear answers have emerged for the significant questions surrounding this issue. What are appropriate criteria for granting degrees and credentials and how can they be implemented? In developing such criteria, how can criteria related to work and more general criteria related to human development be integrated? How can assessment procedures be improved in order to focus on the important outcomes of postsecondary programs? How can such assessment procedures be meshed with the practices and policies of large, complex institutions?

E. Reducing Costs and Stretching the Educational Dollar

The nation's success in expanding educational opportunity came at a high cost. In 1960, when total enrollment was 3 million, total operating expenditures of our colleges and universities were $8.4 billion. By 1970 enrollment had increased to 6.8 million and expenditures had risen from $8.4 to $24.2 billion. As the figures show, not all the increased cost resulted from expansion in enrollment. Costs per student also rose sharply and some of these higher costs were passed on in tuition increases, particularly at private institutions, but also at public institutions. Today, it is estimated that a four year college education at a private institution will cost the learner an average of $17,500 and at a public institution an average of $8,500.

Higher education expenditures, by 1970, had also assumed a more prominent and visible place in total spending. In 1960, current operating expenditures of colleges and universities represented 1.1 percent of the Gross National Product; by 1970 they had risen to 2.5 percent. Higher education expenditures, which had once occupied a fairly modest part of State expenditures, had risen to highly visible elements in many State budget. And this occured at a time when competition for other public expenditures such as welfare, health, and conservation was also growing stronger.

During the period of expansion, the amount of resources used was often considered a measure of quality. Thus efforts to improve quality usually took the form of injecting more resources. Strategies for

increasing productivity in education, on the other hand, were rarely devised or utilized. Today, however, increased effectiveness with the same money may be the only way to bring about improvements in quality since longer and larger budgets for postsecondary education no longer are available.

Thus, to meet the crunch of rising costs, ways must be found to use resources more effectively. The Fund encourages proposals responsive to the following kind of questions: Are there ways institutions can phase out programs which are no longer meeting important social needs and no longer central to the institution's mission? By means of academic common markets, contractual arrangements, and other forms of collaboration, can institutions reduce costs and more fully utilize existing resources by sharing faculties and facilities? Can incentives that affect students, faculties, and administrators be geared toward greater productivity? Can new staffing patterns achieve a cost-effective use of faculty talent--the major expense item in most institutional budgets?

F. Making Better Use of Educational Resources Beyond Colleges and Universities

Because colleges and universities seem to hold the dominant position in postsecondary education in terms of awarding degrees and credentials, in terms of public policy, and in terms of publicized learner options, often overlooked is the fact that available resources

for education beyond high school outside of the collegiate sector are far more numerous and diverse.

--in 1970 it was estimated that government and military programs involved 21.7 million students, compared to the 7.3 enrolled in colleges and universities.

--in 1970 it was estimated that at least another 10 million were enrolled in private trade and technical schools, correspondence programs, and programs of community agencies.

Although the quality of these educational programs for the purposes for which they are established may be very high, participants rarely receive recognition in the form of degrees or credits. In some cases, the offerings seem to be too narrow in scope to warrant credentials such as degrees; yet they may be no more specialized or narrow in nature than courses in colleges which earn credit toward degrees.

Colleges and universities which are now seeking to add occupational options to their programs should not overlook the presence of resources already available to supply these options. The full utilization of these resources requires permitting a broader currency to such programs for the learner and better linking of all available resources through information services and interinstitutional arrangements.

Can we find ways to legitimize learning, wherever it occurs, while maintaining appropriate standards? How can we expand an institution's options to learners by utilizing more fully educational

resources beyond the institution? How can we develop approaches to blend the special purpose programs of industry, business, and the military and private trade and technical schools with the broader academic programs of colleges and universities?

G. Helping People Make Better Choices About Whether, When, and Where to Enroll for Education Beyond High School

Over ten million people each year decide to pursue some form of postsecondary education. Yet the information and advice upon which their decisions are based has improved little since the 1950's, when counseling was institutionalized in public high schools. Today, there is an urgent need for further improvement.

The backgrounds, abilities, and interests of those who seek advice have changed, and the range of available programs to be considered has expanded. Although preparation for jobs is not the only purpose of higher education, there is a growing lack of confidence in the higher education system's ability to effectively guide all students into fields where future jobs are likely to be available. With the rising costs of postsecondary education and new uncertainties about the employment prospects for college graduates, students and parents want better information about the costs and value of attending various kinds of institutions. Many industries have their own training programs for employees and seek means for phasing their programs with those of the public and private education sectors. Moreover, adults

now represent a rapidly increasing portion of the incoming student population. Yet adults are unserved by high schools, and rarely find in public libraries or other community institutions helpful information or advising services. Employers, educators and labor unions are often hindered from working together to develop useful information systems because no linkages exist. While occupational and educational information exists it is rarely integrated into a system which allows an individual to understand fully the consequences of a decision to pursue further education.

More is at stake than simply reducing the frustrations of those who undertake to further their education. For a society increasingly concerned with reducing the costs of education, and increasing its effectiveness, much can be gained by facilitating more effective matches between individuals and institutions and by improving the fit between the education provided and the social and economic needs of the community. Better information about career opportunities and the educational programs which lead to them can reduce wandering and disappointment after graduation. Perfecting the quality of student decision-making about educational alternatives--especially at a time when public financing of postsecondary education is increasingly allocated in the form of student assistance--can strengthen accountability among all postsecondary institutions.

What kinds of linkages between education and work are necessary to improve decisions about education? Can agencies be created that

provide current information effectively at low cost? Can a way be found also to accommodate the personal counseling needed by some who are making major life changes? How can information services affect the quality and programs of educational institutions. Can the information be provided which eliminates the trade-offs between various career patterns, financial aid plans, and educational programs?

H. Preserving Institutional Vitality in the Face of Growing Rigidity and Regulation

During the last fifty years, extraordinary growth trends in science, technology, business corporations, and government resulted in the emergence of large--sometimes gigantic--and complex organizations. Postsecondary education is no exception. Approximately one third of all persons enrolled in postsecondary education now find themselves in institutions with more than 20,000 students. Multi-campus systems of colleges and universities today govern over 40 percent of the entire student population.

Unfortunately, as postsecondary education has become "big business," the faculties and administrators who are closest to the students are increasingly unable to respond to their changing needs and interests. Decisions which used to be the prerogative of teachers, deans, and even campus chancellors are increasingly made by central administrations. Issues central to the process of teaching--e.g., faculty salaries and workloads--are increasingly resolved in State capitols, through negotiations among state-wide organizations.

Bigness has intensified pressures for accountability. State legislatures, State agencies and governing boards, and lay trustees, responding to the legitimate demands for economy, have increased their demands for cost information, tightened expenditure categories, increased reporting requirements, and "legislated" workloads (e.g., faculty contact hours). The unregulated growth of postsecondary education in the past decades is being replaced by new efforts to regulate economies and greater performance.

Given the complex forces at work, it was probably inevitable that institutions, systems of institutions, and state-wide frameworks for postsecondary education would develop as they have. Moreover, large systems such as those emerging in postsecondary education can serve to protect values which have long contributed to the vitality of American education--the richness of offerings, the diversity among institutions, the scope for initiative to respond to new conditions. Whether the emerging systems will liberate initiative or stifle it will depend, in the next five or ten years, on the answers given to the following kinds of questions: Can ways be found by which central authorities can <u>induce</u> change, and offer incentives for quality improvement, rather than <u>regulate</u> it? Can institutional autonomy <u>and</u> accountability be simultaneously strengthened? Can financial support to institutions be provided in ways that will reinforce their particular missions, and strengthen their capacity to perform these missions? Can processes of review and assessment be developed which will take into account institutional differences and multiple dimensions of excellence?

III. GUIDE FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Although the first stage of this competition calls for a 5 page preliminary proposal, you will find it useful to think through all of the major elements of a full proposal before submitting this preliminary application. The following guide to proposal preparation is intended to aid you in that process, as well as in the preparation of the full proposal. This guide is not an outline, but rather a series of questions, the answers to which should form the substance of your proposal. Many of these questions, particularly those concerned with significance, impact, and evaluation are questions which the Fund staff and field readers will ask as they seek to understand and evaluate your proposal.

Problem Identification

The first section of your full proposal should identify the problem you wish to alleviate by the planned action. Section II of this Program Announcement identifies general problem or priority areas that interest the Fund, but it sets forth only relatively generalizable and broad parameters of these problems. In your proposal, we will seek to find a particularization of these problems or priorities with reference to your own institution or agency. In what ways has the problem affected your interests? How central is the problem to the vitality of your institution or the effectiveness of your educational service? What

will be the likely consequences if no action is taken? If improvements in practice are sought, what is the special impetus for seeking the improvements? Have you made any efforts to achieve these purposes in the past? If so, what were they and what were the results?

We will also be seeking to assess the relative importance of the educational-social need you have identified. Thus, supporting empirical evidence you might provide would be extremely helpful. Suppose you wish to serve a population not now well served by institutions in your area. What are the characteristics of this population? What is the situation with regard to available postsecondary opportunities? Why are they not now well served?

Statement of Intended Outcomes

Given the problem or problems you are addressing, what are the outcomes you expect from your project? How would you describe what you wish to accomplish? To answer these questions on specific objectives does not require that the outcomes by simple or uni-dimensional. It does mean that you have some predetermined objectives for the activity you wish to launch.

There might be several outcomes--some immediate, others more long-range; some direct, others more indirect or remote from the immediate action. But it should be possible to identify in your proposal both the immediate and long-range outcomes and the relation of those to the need you have described. If the direct outcome is not a benefit to learners, then the Fund's learner-centered focus requires that you show how the immediate

outcome will have an ultimate impact on the learner. Any change in practice may result in some benefits, and those changes introduced to achieve a particular outcome may result in quite another unanticipated benefit. The value of such benefits is not denied. But the changed practices and programs which the Fund is interested in supporting are those which are designed to achieve particular results addressed to identified problems.

Once you have clearly stated the intended outcomes of your activity, you have solved the most difficult phase of thinking through the problem of evaluation. Clarity about intended outcomes is the only phase of evaluation we ask you to describe in the preliminary proposal.

In the full proposal, however, we ask for a section on evaluation. How do you intend to determine whether or not your project has accomplished its objectives? It may be difficult, within the terms of the grant, to assess accomplishment of long-range objectives, but you should be able to develop some threshold indicators of success for the immediate or short-range objectives. Indicators of success should be responsive to the objectives; the nature of the indicators will vary with the type of objectives.

Fund supported projects are based in real situations. They are efforts to bring about improvements in actual on-going enterprises and agencies. They are not artificially created experiments which can always be tightly designed and controlled. And because of this, the evaluation design is

often more difficult. Nonetheless, this effort to build such a design into the project, even when its results may not be completely conclusive in this one trial, is essential. The tentative conclusion may serve as the basis for design of more rigorous research on experimentation as well as enhancing your own operation.

Description of Proposed Project

The third section of your proposal should describe how you will bring about the outcomes you desire. It is surprising how often we must search diligently in a proposal to determine exactly how an applicant will use the requested support. Indeed, in some proposals the activities to be undertaken become clear only by reading the budget, and then relating the budget back to the narrative. What specific actions will be made possible by the grant? Who will be the change agents undertaking these actions? In a preliminary proposal, you will not be able to provide details, but you should clearly communicate the key features of the approach you are taking to accomplish your objectives.

It is primarily this description of your approach which will enable those who read your proposal to assess the effects your project might have beyond your own institution or agency. Your specific problem diagnosis and statement of immediate objectives provide a basis for judging the effect of the project on your own institution or agency. But the Fund also attempts to assess how others may benefit from your undertaking. Do the activities you propose represent a significant departure from,

or improvement upon, existing practice? Are there features of your project which, if successful, are replicable or applicable elsewhere? To have far-reaching effects, a project need not--and rarely ever is--totally replicable in other settings. But your project may lead to greater understanding of successful processes, or include features or processes which have portability, or produce fresh perspectives or insights significant for a broader arena within postsecondary education. Your position or role within postsecondary education may be such that an improvement or innovation by you would quickly come to the attention of others. Or, there may be deliberate ways to bring visibility to your approach. Your project should ultimately be capable of benefitting more than those you immediately impact upon and serve.

Whereas in the assessment of preliminary proposals the focus of attention is on the potential significance of your project, in the assessment of full proposals the focus shifts to issues of feasibility. Given the fact that your project is potentially significant, is there evidence of the capacity, commitment, and realism necessary to achieve the stated objectives?

Your full proposal, therefore, should expand upon your earlier description of how you intend to bring about the outcomes you desire. What is needed here, for adequate judgment, is a scenario complete with settings, actors, events, and calendars for your planned activity. The Fund recognizes that the scenario you propose may have to be changed; but we ask you

to recognize that only with information about specific actions, agents, budgets, and timetables can the Fund assess your capacity to perform the project. As we read your description, we will be asking whether the project is realistically capable of performance in terms of the people and funds allocated to the task. Beyond that, is the ratio of cost to benefit such that this type of activity, if successful, would encourage reallocation or greater allocation of resources for such activities?

We are interested, too, not only in understanding your proposed approach, but in knowing why you selected it to accomplish your objectives. Have you tried it on a more modest scale, or do you know of experimentation with it? Or is it because you have reason to believe that it would work regardless of the fact that it has never been tried? Perhaps it has been tried elsewhere and failed, but you could cite particular modifications in your approach which would lead to different results.

Finally, your full proposal should provide evidence of commitment to the proposed project. Has your institution a "track record" of success in this type of activity? Has your institution or agency allocated any of its own resources to the project? Have the potential beneficiaries, the learners, been involved in the planning, if appropriate for the project? Does the success of the project depend on agencies or institutions in addition to the applicant? If so, have they been contacted, and what is their view of the proposed action? Have those who will implement the project been involved in the planning? What are

the possibilities for continuation of the project, if appropriate, when it becomes successful? Would the applicant support it after termination of the grant from the Fund? Or are there plans for eventual self-support build into the project? Are there external pressures or incentives that will reinforce the commitment to the project once it is underway?

We recognize that not all of the above specific questions will pertain to your particular proposal, nor do we necessarily expect to find in your proposal direct responses to all of them. However, it is our hope that these queries have stimulated the kind of analysis and preparation which may lead to the development of a stronger proposal.

The next section describes the formal proposal submission and review prodecures which will apply this year.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Eligibility

The Fund will provide grants to and contracts with institutions of postsecondary education or combinations of such institutions and other educational agencies and organizations concerned with the improvement of postsecondary education. The Fund encourages the submission of proposals from new as well as existing structures.

B. Kinds of Support

Awards will be made through the instrumentality of grants and contracts, depending on the nature of the project and its objectives, except that all for-profit institutions may receive assistance only in the form of contracts.

In order to maximize the impact of the Fund's scarce resources, and to ensure the active commitment of institutions and agencies to projects proposed, the Fund may employ various financial techniques, such as:

-- Cooperative funding. The Fund is interested in cooperating with other funding agents where this will lead to viable combinations of support.

-- Cost sharing. The Fund may ask that sponsoring instiutions provide some portion of total project costs.

-- Diminishing awards. Funding extending over more than one year may take the form of higher initial support, with decreasing proportions of the total costs borne by the Fund over time.

The Fund will not, except in highly unusual circumstances, support requests for student financial aid or the costs of facility construction.

C. Review Procedures

(1) The Director and staff of the Fund will review each proposal to determine: (a) its eligibility for funding; (b) its comparative contribution to the Fund's general criteria (outlined in Part I) and the relevant program objectives; (c) the extent to which, in meeting these goals, the project (i) represents an improvement upon, or significant departure from, existing practice, and (ii) involves processes, features, or products applicable in other postsecondary educational settings; (d) the feasibility of its project design, including budget and evaluation plans; (e) evidence of commitment to the proposed activity, including, when appropriate, institutional cost-sharing; and (f) its appropriateness for Fund support in terms of the availability of other external funding sources for the proposed activities. Outside readers and consultants will frequently be asked to evaluate the proposals and to undertake on-site examinations. Final decisions will be made by the Director of the Fund in consultation with the Board.

(2) Section 404(b) of the enabling legislation states, in part, "No grant shall be made or contract entered into under subsection (a) for a project or program with any institution of postsecondary education unless it has been submitted to each appropriate State Commission established under Section 1202

of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and an opportunity afforded such Commission to submit its comments and recommendation to the Secretary". The Fund encourages postsecondary institutions to keep their respective State agencies informed of the submission of proposals in order to expedite the review process and ensure proper coordination with the objectives of State policy. However, proposals should be forwarded directly to the Fund from applicant institutions. After review by the Fund, designated 1202 State Postsecondary Education Commissions, where established, will be notified and asked to comment upon those proposals which are under consideration for funding.

D. Submission of Proposals -- Instructions for the Comprehensive Program

(1) General Procedures and Closing Dates

-- PLEASE NOTE: Although the Fund is not a unit of the U.S. Office of Education, OE's proposal receipt procedures are being utilized by the Fund this year. These procedures differ in several important respects from those utilized by the Fund in the past.

-- There will be a two-stage submission and review process for proposals submitted under this program. Preliminary proposals will be required from all applicants and must be received on or before January 5, 1976. These preliminary proposals will then be reviewed by the Fund and those applicants invited to submit full proposals will be notified by February 5, 1976. Final proposals submitted by those applicants who are invited to do so must be received on or before March 5, 1976.

(2) Mailing Address

All proposals and related correspondence should be addressed to:

U. S. Office of Education
Application Control Center
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202
Attn: 13:538

(3) Applications sent by mail.

An application sent by mail will be considered to be received on time by the Application Control Center if:

(a) The application was sent by registered or certified mail not later than December 31, 1975, as evidenced by the U.S. Postal Service postmark on the wrapper or envelope, or on the original receipt from the U.S. Postal Service; or

(b) The application is received on or before the closing date of January 5, 1976, by either the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, or the U.S. Office of Education mail room in Washington, D.C. In establishing the date of receipt, the Assistant Secretary for Education will rely on the time-date stamp of such mail rooms or other documentary evidence of receipt maintained by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, or the U.S. Office of Education.

(4) Hand delivered applications.

An application to be hand delivered must be taken to the U.S. Office of Education Application Control Center, Room 5673, Regional Office Building Three, 7th and D Streets, S.W., Washington, D.C. Hand delivered

applications will be accepted daily between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time except Saturdays, Sundays, or Federal holidays. Applications will not be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on January 5, 1976.

(5) Proposal Information - General

The formats for preliminary and final proposals submitted under the Comprehensive Program are described below.

All applicants are urged to develop proposals which are brief and precise.

State and local governmental agencies (e.g., State and local departments of education) applying to the Fund are required to submit proposals which comply with those procedures outlined in OMB Circular A-102--e.g., utilization of forms #80-R0187 (for preliminary proposals), and #80-R0186 (for final proposals). In addition, these applicants are obliged to submit no more than one (1) original and two (2) copies of proposals. Please contact the Fund if such forms are not available in your agency.

All other applicants must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies of preliminary and final proposals. Applicants are also requested to submit two (2) additional copies of the Title Page itself.

(6) Proposal Information - Preliminary Proposals Submitted Under the Comprehensive Program. Each preliminary proposal should include the the following information.

-- Title Page. Utilizing Form 0001 (attached) or a suitable facsimile, each proposal copy should be covered by a title page.

-- Narrative. The narrative should include the following four kinds of information: (a) statement of the problem being addressed; (b) description of the expected outcomes of the proposed project; (c) description of how the objectives are to be accomplished; (d) description of the project's impact beyond the institution. The narrative should be no more than five (5) pages in length.

-- Institutional information. Applicants may at their discretion submit, as appendix to the narrative, background information on their institutions or agencies which is relevant to a full understanding of the significance and feasibility of the proposed project. This background information however should be no more than two (2) pages in length.

-- Budget. No budget forms or detailed breakdowns are required. However, preliminary proposals should include the estimated budget range and the nature and amounts of major anticipated expenditures.

(7) Proposal Information - Final Proposals Submitted Under the Comprehensive Program. Each submission should include the following facsimile, each proposal copy should be covered by a title page. Following the title page, a one-page abstract should be attached which describes: (1) the problem addressed, (2) the project's specific objectives, and (3) a description of the proposed activities.

-- Narrative. While there is no standard format for proposal narratives, the following four kinds of information should be provided:

(a) Problem identification. The Fund is interested in what problem the proposal seeks to address. This diagnosis should include, if apprropiate, (1) a description of the nature of the problem and related conditions, (2) supporting empirical evidence, and (3) a description of past attempts to deal with this problem and an assessment of these attempts.

(b) Statement of intended outcomes. This should include (1) the short-term and long-term outcomes expected from the project, and (2) an evaluation plan, indicating the manner by which project accomplishes will be measured.

(c) Description of proposed project. This should include (1) the project's approach, steps to be taken in implementing the project, and the schedule for completion, (2) the agents who will implement the project, (3) an indication of the nature and extent of commitment to and involvement in the project on the part of the sponsoring institution(s), agencies, relevant constituencies, (4) if the project is continuing, expected sources of financial support after the period of Fund support has elapsed, and (5) an explanation of the project's anticipated impacts beyond the applicant institution.

— Institutional information. Applicants may at their discretion submit as an appendix to the proposal background information on their institutions or agencies which is relevant to a full understanding of the significance and feasibility of the proposed project.

Applicants are also requested to attach resumes of the professional background of key project personnel.

-- Budget. Utilizing Form 0002 (attached), or a suitable facsimile, a complete standard budget should be prepared, detailing expenditures for salary, travel, etc. Indirect costs may be assessed only if the rate has been previously approved by the Office of Grants Administration Policy of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A budget statement should include (1) an indication of the basis upon which certain costs are estimated (professional personnel, consultants, travel, indirect costs), and explanation of amounts for other individual cost categories that may appear to be out of the ordinary, (2) in narrative form, a description of the relationship of the major cost items to the proposed project activities, and (3) the costs of the project's evaluation components.

0001 (ASE)

FUND FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

This application should be sent to:
Office of Education; No. 13.538
Application Control Center;
400 Maryland Avenue, SW; Washington, D. C. 20202

538AH61046A
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIV
ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON HIGHER ED
ONE DUPONT CIRCLE - SUITE 630
WASHINGTON DC 20036

1. LEGAL APPLICANT

Legal Applicant Name

Department, Division, or Branch

Street Address, or P.O. Box

City State ZIP

2. PROJECT DIRECTOR

Name

Title

Telephone

3. INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION (if applicable)

Highest Degree Offered _____ Approx. Total Enrollment _____ Private ☐ Public ☐

4. BUDGET REQUESTED:

1st year _____

2nd year (if applicable) _____

3rd year (if applicable) _____

Total: _____

5. DURATION OF PROJECT

Starting Date _____ Ending Date _____

6. PROPOSAL TITLE

7. BRIEF ABSTRACT OF PROPOSAL:

8. AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL: _____ Title: _____
Name

_____ Date _____
Signature